

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA SUBCOMMITTEE
RIO NUEVO/DOWNTOWN, ARTS, CULTURE AND HISTORY**

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION REPORT & SUMMARY

Thursday, November 30, 2006

Riverpark Inn Hotel, 350 S. Freeway Road

Tucson, Arizona

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:	Council Member Nina Trasoff, Subcommittee Chair, Ward 6 Council Member Jose Ibarra, Ward 1 Council Member Steve Leal, Ward 5
STAFF LIAISON:	Greg Shelko, Rio Nuevo Director

AGENDA ITEM/MAYOR AND COUNCIL ACTION	STAFF ACTION
1. Call to Order The meeting was called to order at 5:10 p.m.	
4. Downtown Links <i>Item No. 4 was taken out of order.</i> <i>Chair Trasoff announced that the Downtown Links Citizens Advisory Committee (DLCAC) unanimously approved an option for the Barraza-Aviation alignment. She said the option is referred to as the 7th Avenue alignment only because of where it ends. It also goes up 5th and 6th Avenues so she suggested calling it the “Up Town Alignment”, or “Up Town Links Corridor” because some people in the community refer to the area north of the railroad tracks as the “Up Town Arts District.”</i> <i>Jim Glock, Director of Transportation reported that five alternatives were presented to DLCAC in response to the Warehouse Arts District Plan that was adopted by the Mayor & Council. The desire was to have linkage between the Broadway interchange and 6th Street and to stay on the north side of the railroad tracks leaving Toole Avenue from 6th Street to St. Mary’s open for development. DLCAC whittled down the five alternatives to two. Concept No. 1 had a modest four lane roadway extending along the north side of the tracks connecting to 5th Avenue, 6th Avenue and a disconnected 6th Street (going under the railroad tracks matching up to 6th Street/ St. Mary’s). Concept No. 2 runs along the north side of the railroad tracks connecting to 5th Avenue, 6th Avenue and then extending and “T-ing” into 6th Street along the 7th Avenue alignment. Enhanced pedestrian/bicycle crossings are also proposed.</i> <i>In both concepts, staff planned a depressed roadway and that intersected with 6th Avenue north of the 6th Avenue Underpass, which would have required the reconstruction of the 6th Avenue Underpass. Staff looked at engineering options and challenges associated with each concept. What was chosen was a four lane divided roadway linking with 5th Avenue (as it is today) and 6th Avenue (making it a two-way street). It would then “T-into” 6th Street just west of 7th Avenue so accessibility could be maintained to the front of Benjamin Supply and the Tucson Transfer Warehouse. Another unique concept in the selected alternative was the 6th Avenue Underpass</i>	

would not have to be rebuilt. The facility would actually go over the underpass entry and off-ramps on the north side, thereby saving another one of the historic underpasses downtown. Another factor is that the City would not be bound by modern geometric standards - grades on the south side and the building that MOCA is currently occupying wouldn't be impacted. RTA funds will be pursued to make sure the underpass is stabilized, the concrete is sealed properly and the lighting system improved.

The November 15 motion made by Don Durband and seconded by the Historic Commission representative, Jerry Guliani eliminated Concept No. 1 (characterized as the 6th Street disconnect) and directed staff to pursue some version of Concept No. 2. DLCAC unanimously supported it. On Tuesday, the proposal was presented to the Transportation Subcommittee and they too unanimously supported the concept and recommended that it be forwarded to Mayor and Council.

Mr. Glock said the conceptual drawing did not articulate a lot of the detail and that the whole pictorial communication scheme would change with respect to moving this concept forward and working with DLCAC. There is still a tremendous amount of work to be done with respect to refining the concept – looking at the grades, the width of the roads, access to adjacent properties, development opportunities, and how to get under the railroad at 6th Avenue. All concepts made sure that the roadway itself and retaining walls could be built north of the existing Steinfeld Warehouse. DLCAC is challenging staff to allow for the Citizens Storage and Transfer to also be retained. The consultant team is aware of their request, however, staff does not guarantee it is possible because the Tucson Arroyo, a very large underground stormwater conveyance system that runs along this alignment as well has to be accommodated.

Mr. Glock advised that at this point, staff is prepared to take it to Mayor and Council for their approval and to have staff further refine the concept. The project is well over a year away of getting all the outstanding issues resolved.

Chair Trasoff asked staff to get the vision of what the “world would feel like.” She gave the Grant Road Corridor as an example of where staff is participating in a visioning process and getting the community's input about what they want the look and feel to be. It's a Tucson based road, not just a road anywhere. Mr. Glock responded absolutely. In fact, there's a community-based land use discussion/conversation occurring this evening. Input from these conversations will be provided to DLCAC so they can help shape the sense of form and have that design be contextually sensitive to both the existing and potential adjacent land uses.

Council Member Leal asked Mr. Glock to elaborate on how the alignment interfaces at 5th and 6th Avenues. Glock responded that 5th Avenue would accommodate left turn traffic out heading southbound onto the facility and right turn traffic in. If right turns on, or left turns off to the system can be accommodated staff will consider that.

However, it may be problematic given the proximity to 6th Avenue where it's staff's desire to be able to accommodate a right turn out and then just as you are going around the warehouse to head north on 6th Avenue be able to accommodate a turn movement. The roadway would go over the roadways on the north side of the 6th Avenue underpass, respecting the historical character of the 6th Avenue underpass. If you are heading south bound on the new two-way 6th Avenue and you wanted to enter the facility, you would turn left going to 7th Street and come into a "T-Intersection" that is planned and then head south-east bound. The northbound traffic would have the ability to turn right and enter onto the frontage road that is there today.

Council Member Leal asked if the traffic volumes on 5th or 6th were available? Mr. Glock responded they were not available; however, now that a concept has been selected the traffic modeling work can be started. 6th Avenue under the railroad tracks will be one lane in each direction and DLCAC is trying to be sensitive to West University north of 6th Street where it would be converted from a three-lane northbound to a two-lane roadway with a continuous left turn lane. Traffic volumes in the area will probably be saturated during peak hours and daily and weekend volumes will be considerably less.

Council Member Leal asked what thoughts had gone into to slowing down or stopping traffic from taking short cuts north of 6th? Mr. Glock responded that the discussion did not occur at the DLCAC level, but in the case of 7th Avenue there will be an offset with 7th Avenue "T-ing" in west of the existing 7th Avenue north. With the respect to the movement heading north on 6th Avenue what we will see is reduced traffic to the north. Transportation may recommend the elimination of the traffic signal on 6th Avenue at Grant and Speedway, which would help the progression on those particular streets. These are all ideas and options that staff will be working with DLCAC on.

Council Member Leal asked if rubberized asphalt was going to be used in the project? Mr. Glock responded absolutely, that's a given with all transportation projects occurring now. It's only during the colder months that it can't be done because it has a higher setting temperature. Today, all major streets and re-paving projects occurring in the summer time are using an asphalt finish coat.

Council Member Ibarra commented that his office received calls from DLCAC members regarding inconsistencies. He wants staff to go back to DLCAC to make sure everyone understands what they voted on. He asked if one week would derail the project? Mr. Glock responded that it could help calm the concerns that have been expressed, but at the same time staff believes that this could go to the Mayor and Council staff could inform them that those concerns have been raised.

Council Leal said there are too many questions about how the artists are being treated and general security issues in the downtown area and he would like to error on the side of caution and delay forwarding it to the Mayor and Council. He recommended

returning it to DLCAC. Council Member Ibarra said if that was a motion, he'd like to second it. Chair Trasoff said she did not have a problem with that and given the level of mistrust it would serve them well to make sure everybody is on-board. She said it's important to note that this is the basic plan and it still needs to be refined with input from DLCAC. In her opinion the project can be moved forward with the acknowledgement of the DLCAC's concerns, but if it's decided that staff should go back to the DLCAC, there's no problem with doing that.

Chair Trasoff said there were people in the audience who wished to speak on the matter and she gave them an opportunity.

Eugene Caywood spoke as Chair of the DLCAC. He vote that was taken by DLCAC eliminated one option and approved some version of a proposed concept, which still requires revision and refinement by DLCAC.

David Aguirre agreed with Mr. Caywood.

Michael Toney commented on the engineering aspects and said it was very confusing.

Susan Campbell from Santa Theresa Tile Works said she appreciates the fact that staff will be going back to DLCAC because there is a lack of clarity. She was confused because the newspaper said it was the final alignment. Personally, she'd like to know what the other five alignments were?

Chair Trasoff said with all due respect to the reporters present, they report on what they hear at the meetings, and even when they report accurately that an alignment was selected, people think that it is carved in stone. They don't realize that there is still further refinement necessary.

Report received. Staff directed to return to DLCAC to make sure everyone understands what they voted for and delay forwarding the item to the Mayor and Council for one week.

TRANSPORTATION
DIRECTOR
 Is responsible.

3. Origins Long Term Management Plans

Marty McCune, Historic Preservation Officer, advised that at the last meeting staff announced that a management option was being pursued that included the Parks and Recreation Department and a non-profit similar to the zoo's. The management and operating plan received from ConsultEcon shows an annual attendance rate of 238,000 for when everything is built-out. It also gives a staffing plan and costs, but those figures are still being refined because staff is still working on what Tucson Origins will look like and how the museums will participate in management. Staff is not ready to release those figures.

The Mission funding packet is ready to go through the approval process. It will go to the Rio Nuevo Citizens Advisory Committee on December 6th, the Rio Nuevo Multipurpose Facilities District on December 13th, the Rio Nuevo/Downtown Arts, Culture and History Subcommittee on December 14th and the full Mayor and Council on December 19th.

Council Member Ibarra asked if this would be the only Rio Nuevo item on the agenda on December 19th, or will there be other west side items on the agenda? Mr. Shelko responded that the funding of the Mission Complex would be the only Rio Nuevo item on the agenda. However, there is some associated infrastructure (site utilities, site work, landfill remediation) with the project, but no other principal projects. Staff is not prepared to come forward with those right now.

Council Member Leal thanked his colleagues for indulging him on the management structure. In his opinion the way it is put together now, it's really the hybrid version and the best of both worlds.

Marty indicated that the management plan would be brought back to the subcommittee at a later date because there is still some work that needs to be done with the museum partners with respect to programming and management. ConsultantEcon's report has not been refined. Staff needs more time to figure things out. She said staff just wants to make sure that they are proceeding in the right direction.

Chair Trasoff asked if everything goes as planned on December 19th, how long will it be before we see something? Ms. McCune responded that a combined opening for the Presidio and something on the west side (probably Mission Gardens) is scheduled for May. Infrastructure work will start right after the first of the year. Bill O'Malley, Rio Nuevo Construction Manager added that landfill work is currently underway and they would like to start laying adobe in September. Public adobe making events are planned.

Council Member Ibarra commented that what the public is waiting for on the west side is the Science Center. He asked when the Science Center would be breaking ground? Mr. Shelko said he couldn't answer that. He acknowledged that representatives from the University of Arizona were present. Final operating plans and feasibility studies are still pending for the museums and the Science Center, which would give final visitation counts and define their buildings to help them put together a funding request.

Mr. Shelko referred to the West Side Cultural Plan map and said what we are asking for funding now is construction of the Mission, the archaeological site, the native gardens, Mission Gardens, the Carrillo House, all of the site work, site utilities and infrastructure necessary to build it. It also includes environmental remediation of the landfill, which is very expensive, and development of the Festival Area. Effectively, we

will build out what was in the ballot as the Mission Complex and Mission Gardens. Tucson Origins is going to be built under any circumstance. No matter what is built on the west side a streetcar alignment needs to be established, a bridge over the Santa Cruz River needs to be built, Cushing Street needs to be extended, and the Origins site needs an access road. There's some additional design money to work UA Science Center, History Museum, State Museum and Children Museum on trying to identify the final programs for these structures which will then answer how many parking spaces are needed and how many go underground. There is no money for the construction of the parking structure or the plaza in this request. Those things will follow. This will put in all the infrastructure to serve the build out of the entire west side. Tucson Origins is being built for the community and it doesn't need to wait for anything else because it can't go anywhere else.

Mr. Shelko said the contract with Burns Wald-Hopkins was divided in two phases. Phase I was conceptual planning. The construction Manager at Risk and the builder are in place. Phase II would be the actual construction of Origins. Although the Operating Plan for the Origins Center is a fine idea, we don't know how to right-size it until we know what everyone else is going to build. Then we need to decide how to share common elements, and decide if we can afford to do all of it?

Council Member Ibarra said he hopes that at the December 19th Mayor and Council meeting staff says this is what we are moving on right now, but that the Science Center is coming next month. If we are just going in on half of it, at some point the west side and community is going to say to us you still haven't done enough in Rio Nuevo. He wants a time line and believes it's a to only do one project and hope for the next one.

Mr. Shelko responded that it's not the intent to separate them. In fact, the museum team met this morning to talk about urgency. However, right now we are waiting for the final studies to enable us to be able to make those other decisions and to make those requests. He assured him that staff is just as anxious. In fact, there's a meeting this evening with the Menlo Park Neighborhood to talk about their interest and desires for the ultimate development objectives for the development on the west side to start framing up an Request for Qualifications for early next year. Staff sees the development of the west side as all one project and not individual projects. Tucson Origins is great, but what's really great is the collection of the all the institutions and the collective power that they will all bring to not only Tucson, but to the region. To build just one project doesn't deliver to the community.

Mr. Leal said there's been talk about a large organized community effort to make some adobe blocks to have all of us that were sort of born children of what emerged from here come back and reconstitute. Each Ward, each Supervisor's District, the tribes, and South Tucson could bring a five-gallon bucket of dirt. So you have a section in Origins where the blocks are from all those places. It would be recognized as community building project.

<p>Report received. No action taken.</p>	
<p>5. Rio Nuevo/Downtown Strategic Plan</p> <p><i>Mr. Shelko announced that the subcommittee received copies of the Draft Rio Nuevo/Downtown Strategic Plan. The format follows what other subcommittees have done. It contains the projects that were listed in the outline he gave them several months ago, with the addition of text and narrative. Performance Measures were added on the projects where we will actually see groundbreakings or some other milestone. What he's asking for tonight is whether this acceptable? Should he move forward with some final edits so staff can submit it to the Budget & Research Department and they can finalize it, or should staff work on it over the next couple of weeks and bring it back to the subcommittee for final approval at the December 14th meeting?</i></p> <p><i>Council Member Trasoff suggested, if her colleagues were okay with the basic organization, that the subcommittee be given one week to give their feedback on either organization or content to staff and then circulate a revised version. If there's no problem, then it's not necessary to bring it back to the subcommittee and we can be done with it. She asked if this was all right? Everyone agreed.</i></p> <p>Update received. Subcommittee members will submit comments to staff and the revised plan will be re-circulated. If there are no further changes, it can be forwarded to the Budget & Research Department for publication.</p>	<p><u>RIO NUEVO</u> <u>DIRECTOR</u> Is responsible.</p>
<p>2. Call to the Audience</p> <p><i>Michael Toney commented on his continuing concerns and legal action against the University of Arizona Science Center.</i></p> <p><i>Mr. Shelko announced that at 6:30 p.m. this evening there's a Menlo Park Neighborhood Association meeting to talk about development and design objectives for the remaining acreage on the west side and anyone is welcome to attend.</i></p>	
<p>6. Adjournment</p> <p><i>The meeting was adjourned at 5:57 p.m.</i></p>	